

Toward Freedom

A NNA DAMON'S relentless crusades against all forms of human oppression gave enduring strength to the struggle for a free America. It was an honor to associate with her as a fellow-officer of the International Labor Defense.

Seldom does a personality merge so completely with a cause as in the case of Anna Damon's 11 years as secretary of the ILD. Her very life was ILD's struggle for civil and political liberty. ILD's struggles and triumphs are an expression of her life.

A notable contribution of Anna Damon to the progressive movement was in her coordinating, and thus strengthening, the common interests of all groups of oppressed Americans. The related struggles of the foreign-born, of the Negro and Jewish peoples and of labor and political prisoners, all found a common focus in the program of ILD.



By Doxey Wilkerson

For example, under the slogan "Free Tom Mooney and Scottsboro Boys," Anna Damon brought labor into the Scottsboro case, and the Negro people into the Mooney case. Thus were both immeasurably strengthened.

A NNA DAMON'S remarkable courage in tackling and fighting through to victory the most "hopeless" of causes is often cited as her most distinguished characteristic. So it was, but this courage was far more than personal. It reflected her deep Marxist understanding of the power of the organized masses. It was grounded upon an unwavering faith that labor and other people's movements would back up campaigns launched in their behalf.

In the recent Oklahoma criminal syndicalism cases, for example, it was clear that victory would require many thousands of dollars, which ILD neither had nor saw available, together with the concerted efforts of hundreds of thousands of progressive citizens, whose active participation during that period

Anna Damon Made A Freer America

of red-baiting ascendancy was by no means assured. Some of her associates were tempted to hesitate, overwhelmed at a task which was so "obviously impossible" of accomplishment.

But Anna Damon never faltered an instant. She saw only one thing: 13 Americans were imprisoned for the sale of progressive books which were repugnant to the pro-fascist forces of Oklahoma. In the interest of our entire nation, they simply had to be freed. So she launched the campaign which led to ILD's great victory in the Oklahoma case.

A NNA DAMON'S courage grew out of her confidence in the people. Neither by her courage nor by the people was she ever failed.

The last two years of Anna Damon's life were devoted to a campaign she was not permitted to complete—the struggle of all progressive mankind to wipe fascist barbarism from the face of the earth. But the ultimate triumph of that struggle is more certain because of the inspiration and maturity and confidence which her life has brought to the progressive forces of America.